

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TAIPEI 00895 091012Z

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SUBJECT: ROC PRESS COMMENTARY ON THE APPOINTMENT OF HUA KUO-FENG
AS PRC ACTING PREMIER

1. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY: ALL FEBRUARY 8 LOCAL NEWSPAPERS
CARRIED REPORTS OF THE NAMING OF HUA KUO-FENG AS PRC ACTING
PREMIER, DRAWING PRIMARILY FROM VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL WIRE
SERVICES. LOCAL PRESS ALSO PROVIDED SUBSTANTIAL BIO DATA ON
HUA WHICH, HOWEVER, APPEARS TO ADD NOTHING TO DATA ALREADY
AVAILABLE IN DEPARTMENT. FOLLOWING ARE SELECTED LOCAL PRESS
COMMENTARY AND EDITORIALS, WHICH GENERALLY VIEWED HUA'S
APPOINTMENT AS AN AT LEAST TEMPORARY VICTORY FOR THE "RADICALS".
END SUMMARY.

2. THE ENGLISH-LANGUAGE CHINA NEWS CARRIED OMMENTS BY LOCAL
PRC "EXPERTS" ON HUA'S APPOINTMENT, NOTING THAT IT "CONFIRMED
THE LONG-HELD VIEW HERE THAT MAO TSE-TUNG IS HELPING HIS WIFE'S
RADICAL GROUP TO TAKE OVER AFTER HE DIES.... THERE IS NO
SURPRISE ELEMENT THAT TENG WAS DUMPED....HE WAS TOO DEEPLY
INVOLVED WITH THE LIU SHAO-CHI CLIQUE TO GET MAO'S FULL
TRUST."

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PAGE 02 TAIPEI 00895 091012Z

3. LOCAL OBSERVERS, THE ARTICLE CONTINUES, "ARE UNANIMOUS IN THEIR VIEW THAT HUA, A VIRTUAL NOBODY UNTIL AFTER THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION, MAY NOT BE ABLE TO STAY AT THE TOP FOR LONG. THE FACT THAT HE WAS ONLY NAMED AS THE ACTING PREMIER INDICATED THAT MAO FACES STRONG OPPOSITION FROM THE PARTY BUREAUCRATS IDENTIFIED WITH THE LATE CHOU EN-LAI....THE SO-CALLED MODERATES WILL CERTAINLY FIGHT BACK AS SOON AS MAO DIES UNLESS THEY ARE COMPLETELY CRUSHED BEFORE THEN. AND THAT EVENTUALITY IS UNLIKELY."

4. ACCORDING TO THE CHINA NEWS REPORT, THE LOCAL EXPERTS "ATTACH GREATER IMPORTANCE TO THE NAMING OF THE FIRST VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE CCP....UNTIL THAT POST IS FILLED...IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO SAY WHICH OF THE CONTENDING FACTIONS IN PEOPING HAS WON DECISIVELY THE FIRST ROUND OF THE INCREASINGLY FIERCE POWER STRUGGLE....THE EXPERTS HOLD THE VIEW THAT THE APPEARANCE OF HUA AT THE CENTER OF PEIPING'S POLITICAL STAGE CAN ONLY USHER IN A MORE VIOLENT PHASE OF THE REGIME'S SIMMERING POWER STRUGGLE. 'WE WOULD BE SURPRISED (SIC) IF ANOTHER CULTURAL REVOLUTION DEVELOPS ON THE MAINLAND.'"

5. CHINESE-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS FURTHER QUOTED LOCAL EXPERTS AS SAYING THAT HARSHER MEASURES AGAINST THE PEOPLE ON THE MAINLAND WILL RESULT FROM HUA'S APPOINTMENT AND THE DIRECTION OF THE PRC'S INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL POLICY WILL CHANGE, DEFINITELY NOT FOLLOWING THE COURSES SET BY CHOU EN-LAI.

6. A FEBRUARY 9 TA HUA WAN PAO ARTICLE SPECULATED THAT HUA'S APPOINTMENT INDICATED THAT THE PRC WOULD PLACE MORE EMPHASIS ON INTERNAL PURGES AND LESS ON EXTERNAL EXPANSION AND THAT A LARGE-SCALE PURGE IS PROBABLY IN THE OFFING. AN A FEBRUARY 9 CHUNG HUA JIH PAO ARTICLE COMMENTED THAT SINCE HUA CANNOT GAIN THE RESPECT OF SENIOR COMMUNIST CADRES AND THE PRC'S RULE BY SECRETT SERVICE AGENTS CANNOT BE ACCEPTED BY THE MAINLAND PEOPLE, THERE WILL BE NEW TURMOIL ON THE MAINLAND.

7. IN EDITORIAL COMMENT, LIEN HO PAO CHARACTERIZED HUA AS "A MAN WITH THREE POWERS IN ONE--POWER FROM THE PARTY, THE GOVERNMENT, AND THE MILITARY." CHINA NEWS EDITORIAL OF FEBRUARY 9 CLAIMS THAT LOCAL POLITICAL COMMENTATORS AS EARLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 TAIPEI 00895 091012Z

AS A YEAR AGO IDENTIFIED HUA AS THE "MAINLAND MAN TO WATCH" AND SUGGESTS TENG HSIAO-PING WILL BE PURGED. WHILE NOTING THAT IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO MAKE ANY DEFINITIVE COMMENT OF CHOU'S SUCCESSION, CHINA NEWS ADDS THAT HUA'S ELEVATION MAY SIGNAL MAO'S DECISION TO "SHAKE EVERYTHING UP" AGAIN. THE PLA, THE EDITORIAL CONTINUES, "MIGHT TRY TO TAKE AND KEEP POWER THIS TIME. THE LIN PIAOISTS WOULD LIKE TO MEND THE RIFT WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND RETURN THE US TO ITS OLD

POSITION OF ENEMY NO. 1....THINGS MAY NOT GO SO FAR AS THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION FOR THE PRESENT....THE BIG BLOW-UP COULD BE POSTPONED UNTIL MAO HIMSELF IS GONE....WE CAN BE SURE, HOWEVER, THAT THE POWER STRUGGLE IS NOT OVER AND THAT THE 'GREAT UPHEAVAL' IS CERTAIN...."

8. IN A SEPARATE EDITORIAL THE CHINA NEWS COMMENTED ON NIXON'S TRIP TO PEKING, NOTING THAT "NIXON IS BEING MANIPULATED. HE IS DOING A GREAT DISSERVICE TO THE AMERICAN NATION, THE FREE WORLD, AND THE CAUSE OF CHINESE LIBERTY." A FEBRUARY 9 CHINA POST EDITORIAL ADDS THAT THE PRC "OBVIOUSLY WANTS NIXON TO CARRY OUT SOME PROPAGANDA FOR THEM UPON HIS RETURN TO THE US. IF SO, THE FORMER US PRESIDENT IS ABOUT TO ADD ANOTHER PAGE TO HIS IGNOMINIOUS PERSONAL HISTORY." POPPLE

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